श्री राम नरेश यादव : महोदया, इन जिला मंचों की स्थापना जिस उद्देश्य को लेकर की गयी है वह बहुत ही पुनीत उद्देश्य है और उसी कड़ी में माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि जब इतने सारे केसेज इनके सामने लंबित है तो इस बात को ध्यान में रखते हुए क्या जल्दी ही या आने वाले थोड़े दिनों के अंदर जिन राज्यों के अंदर इनका गठन हुआ है उनके मंत्रीगणों का आप कोई सम्मेलन बुलाएंगे और इस बारे में गंभीरता के साथ विचार करेंगे ताकि इस कार्य को प्रभावी बनाया जाए और मेरा दूसरा सवाल यह है कि इस बात को ध्यान में रखते हुए जैसा अभी आपने कहा है कि तीन--चार राज्यों में जहां नए जिले गठित हुए है उनमें रिक्त मंच बनाने का प्रयास कर रहे हैं, मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि ऐसे कितने जिले हैंऔर इन जिलों में उनके गठन की प्रक्रिया पूरी करने में कितना समय लगेगा ? मैं यही जानना चाहता हूं ।

SHRI A. K. ANTONY: Madam, the Central Government is again and again requesting the State Governments that they should give more facilities and they should activate these forums. Regarding the non-forum districts, only 32 districts are left out now. Out of these districts, we have already given clearance for forming fourteen new forums in Orissa, two in Punjab and one in Arunachal Pradesh. Now it is for the State Governments to speed up all these things. In almost all the meetings of the Consumer Protection Council, we are discussing the progress achieved in the functioning of the State Commissions, the National Commission and the district forums and from our side, we will constantly monitor these things. Recently, we had a meeting of the Food and Civil Supplies Ministers in which also we discussed all these things. Every now and then, we monitor these things and we give our own guidelines to the State Governments.

Performance of Employees Co-operatives

*363. SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY:
SHRIMATI MIRA DAS:†

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken notice of the fact that some of the employees co-operatives formed to take over sick units are doing well;

(b) whether Government have sought any report on their performance, if so, the details thereof;

(c) what is the number of sick industrial units taken over by the employees co-operatives; and

(d) whether Government have worked out a policy to help employees co-operatives to run industrial units if so, the details thereof and, if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (d) As per the provisions of the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985, it is mandatory for the management of a sick industrial company to make reference to the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR). Revival of sick industrial companies through workers' cooperative is one of the measures envisaged under the Act.

According to the available information, BIFR has so far sanctioned

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Mira Das.

four schemes for revival of sick industrial company through workers' cooperative. These are:

(1) Kamani Tubes Ltd.—Bombay

(2) New Central Jute Mills—Calcutta

(3) Powder Metals & Alloys Ltd.—Thane.

(4) Kamani Metal & Alloys Ltd.—Bombay.

While the schemes at Serial No. 1 to 3 above are under implementation, implementation of the scheme at Serial No. 4 has not yet commenced due to litigation by the original promoters. Ministry of Labour as a matter of general policy does encourage, inter alia, rehabilitation schemes through employees' cooperative. Industry-wise Tripartite Committees have resolved that at the enterprise level, managements and employees could get together and formulate rehabilitation proposals and bring the same for their consideration. Such proposals can also be cooperative based ones. Rehabilitation schemes approved by BIFR in respect of any sick industrial company may provide for financial assistance by way of loans, advances, guarantees or reliefs or concessions from the Central Government, State Governments, bank or financial institutions to such company.

SHRIMATI MIRA DAS: Madam, in our country, we have got 2.42 lakh sick industrial units. Out of these, only four units were taken up as workers' cooperatives and it was done on the basis of the recommendations of the BIFR. Madam, my question was: "Whether these workers' cooperatives are doing well; what their performance is; whether the Government is satisfied with their work; if not what the future plan is." Further I wanted to know whether the Government would permit the workers' cooperatives or they are going to close them or going to privatise them. Has the Government any such plan in future? There is no reply to the question whether the performance of the workers' cooperatives is as per the expectations of the Government or not.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: Madam, the total number of sick units which had been referred to the BIFR so far is 1,568. Out of this, in 410 cases, rehabilitation package has been sanctioned by the BIFR. Out of these 410 units, four units which I have stated in my main reply, have been handed over to the workers. I am also not very much satisfied with my own answer, in the sense, that I could not give much information about the state of affairs of these four units which are being run by the workers' cooperatives. I am trying to get information because it is under the administrative control of the Ministry of Finance. I tried to get some information but I could not get it. But out of those four units, only one has approached our Ministry stating that they are facing some problem in the implementation of the rehabilitation package, that is the New Central Jute Mill of Calcutta. They have some problem of finance because the amount 300 lakhs of rupees, which was supposed to be given by the State Government as an interest-free loan, was not being made available to them. Actually, the understanding was that this money will be made available by the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, to the West Bengal Government and they in turn, would pass on that money to the new Central Jute Mill. We have taken up the matter when a delegation met me. I sent officers there. I am given to understand that a couple of days ago, about two, three days ago, this money has been sanctioned by the Ministry of Textiles and will be made available to the Government of West Bengal. That is one part of it. They have also come with two more requests; one is to write off their past liabilities and second is to make money available from the National Renewal Fund. Once the unit has

been referred to the BIFR and the rehabilitation package is sanctioned, now that rehabilitation package has to be followed strictly according to the formula approved by the BIFR. and in that formula these two components are not available. Therefore, what we are doing now is to forward theid case to the BIFR and if the BIFR in its revised package tells the Government to assist these two companies, we will consider this very sympathetically.

SHRIMATI MIRA DAS: Madam, I am happy that the Minister has honestly admitted the fault any way. For the future I expect some reply from the Minister. In Principle, the Govednment has accepted workers' cooperatives. At the same time there is a competition among the other industrial houses, those who are in existence. I want to know from the Minister what help they are going to give to the workers' cooperatives for their products, for improvement of their work and for marketing their products because obviously and mostly they are facing troubles for lack of marketing for their products. And as the Government has not yet taken action to market their products, which way is the Government helping them and protecting their interests?

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: Madam, as for as the revival of the units under the worker's cooperatives is concerned, as I have already stated, it has to go according to the package sanctioned by the BIFR. If anything more is to be done over and above what BIFR has done to them....

SHRIMATI MIRA DAS: The BIFR is not in favour of workers' cooperative. It is for privatisation. ....

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: No, no; let me complete. Madam, I am just stating the facts. Over and above that package if they want more, they come to the Government as in the case of New Central Jute Mills, go back to the BIFR and then we get it. Okay. As far as the other units which have not yet gone to the BIFR are concerned, the Government has established, constituted a special tripartite Committee and six more sectoral industrial Committees to go into the problems of sickness of each unit. There, what we have decided is, if the workers are willing to take over the sick units under a cooperative, the Government will be willing to hand over that unit to them and the details have been worked out. The workers and the management were required to sit together and come out with a proposal. They could come out with many proposals out of which one could be about the workers' cooperative. Now for a few months I had been waiting for such proposals and so far no proposal had come. And as far as the day-to-day relief for them is concerned, in the case of marketing support etc. there are guidelines issued by the BIFR itself and in Appendix 6 of the guidelines all the facilities that they are entitled to are set out and the appropriate Government—either the State Government or the Central Government, as the case may be—according to the status of a particular unit, it is proposed to give them some relief. As I said, I have no detailed information even on this; so I will certainly collect that facilities they have been given and I will certainly inform the Mem-

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, I unhesitatingly congratulate the hon. Minister of Labour because he has been able to discover at least four cases where cooperatives had been set up. While congratulating him, let me contest the figures that he is presenting before the Parliament. I am contesting the figures. What he is saying is that out of 3,000 odd public sector units which are referred to the BIFR, co-operative are being set up in four cases. May I inform the hon. Minister that, according to the bulletin of Reserve Bank of India, the total number of units closed in the country on account of sickness is not 3,000 odd? It is nearly 3 lakhs. Therefore, the

point is that there are only a very few, a microscopic few, cases where the co-operatives could have been set up as a revival process. Part (a) of my supplementary is: Why does he find it so difficult on the part of the trade unions to agree to it? Why don't workers agree to it? What is his reaction as the Labour Minister? Because the workers are the worst victims of the sickness. Why don't the workers agree to the proposal of co-operatives being set up?

Part (b) of my supplementary is that the units he referred to include Kamani. I had been to Kamani as a part of the Committee set up by his Ministry and I had been to other units also. Is the Minister aware that the co-operative which have been set up are consistently complaining of absence of any encouragement from the Governments, The State Governments and the Central Government are not giving them any encouragement. Therefore, in this connection, part (b) of my supplementary is like this: Is he aware that the banks do not agree to give concessional credit? Is he aware that the State Governments do not give them any concessions? Is he aware that with the very little marketing facilities they have to compete with the profitable concerns, the big units, the multinationals? Part (b) of my supplementary is...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him answer.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Is he aware of it?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let us find out whether he is aware or not.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Part (c) of my supplementary is...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no. He is not aware of it. Let him be aware. We have got...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, he is referring to the BIFR. What I am saying is that the BIFR is taking unusual time and there is unusual delay and in the course of the period when a decision is being taken there is no supply of credit. There is nothing. While the cases are being decided in the BIFR...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him answer, please.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: ...they are going sick.

उपसभापति : मंत्री जी बोलिए।

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Therefore, part (c) of my question is: How does he propose to make the BIFR a little more active?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You have asked three supplementaries. He will answer one.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I have asked three questions (a), (b) and (c).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: (a), (b) and (c) are linked. To my knowledge they are (1), (2) and (3).

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: Madam, I want to respectfully submit that what I have stated has been the factual position as available with me. The question does not relate to the sickness of industry as a whole. I am not going to accept or dispute the figure of 3,00,000 odd which the hon. Member has been given because it does not relate to that. The question is: How many sick units have been taken over by the co-operatives of the workers out of the total number? Out of the 1,366 sick units referred to the BIFR, four units, as per rehabilitation package, have been handed over to the workers' co-operatives. That is the factual position. There could be units which are being run under co-operatives on their

own. I have no information about them. I have my personal knowledge, for example, in Gujarat Tractors Ltd. which is being wonderfully run —I myself went to visit that unit— nothing has been done without being referred to the BIFR. There can be many more such units. I am not going into that. But as far as those which are run by the workers' co-operatives are concerned, I have stated that except for New Central Jute Mills no other has come to us stating that they have such and such problems. Only one unit has come to us, particularly to me, telling us its problems and I said that I had taken up its problems. One of its major problems of getting Rs. 3 crores has now been solved and the fund has now been made available to it. I am taking up the other two problems with the Ministry concerned which, in turn, will take them up with the BIFR. Therefore, if there fore, if there are any substantial problems faced by those units which are run by the workers' co-operatives, I assure the House, if they are brought to my notice, that I will take personal interest to see to it that some of their problems are sorted out.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Why don't workers agree to it?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is over. Shri Chimanbhai Mehta.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Madam, I want to ask a supplementary.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have got your name. Members should ask small supplementaries. If they put three questions in one question, I cannot call all of you. It goes on your account.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Madam, I know fully well that the Labour Minister personally and his Department is definitely inclined to encourage cooperatives. Just now he has cited an example of Gujarat Tractors. Last week also this question was put. At that time no reply was given. My question is: Why do you always prefer the BIFR? You are able to dispose of 410 cases and 900 cases are still pending.

You have written that it is mandatory. The Gujarat Tractors could do voluntary cooperative away from the scope of the BIFR. Why have you not found out that the BIFR route is not really so suitable? The Chief Minister of West Bengal, Shri Jyoti Basu, has also requested—I read it in the newspaper—that the BIFR should not always be made mandatory when so many units are sick. Therefore, take some other route. Make some bilateral arrangement. The Government must intervene in it. What is your response? Would you take up the view that we have to encourage cooperatives? If you believe in socialism, would you do it?

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: Madam, the provision of the SICA is, whenever a particular unit has reached a certain state of health, i.e. if the cumulative loss of that particular unit has become equal or more than the net worth of that unit, it has to be necessarily referred to the BIFR. That is the legal position. Whether that unit is working well or not, of course, is a question which is being debated. In fact, the Goswami Committee has made a comment on it saying that the BIFR should not be the only route. It should not be made mandatory. It should be made voluntary. The report of the Goswami Committee says that. That is number one. The decision of the special Tripartite Committee is that if workers are willing to take sick units under cooperatives, we will be willingly giving them that unit to be run by them. That is the policy of the Government. The Finance Minister, who attended the special Tripartite Committee meeting, went to the

extent of saying that on case to case basis depending on the rehabilitation package formulated by the workers concerned or the management or the BIFR, they can even consider on the basis of merit, writing off the past liabilities due to the Government. We are willing to help to that extent. Thirdly, even if a unit has already been referred to the BIFR before the BIFR has come to a final conclusion, if workers and the management could formulate jointly a rehabilitation package, there is no bar for withdrawing the case from the BIFR. That unit can go ahead with the rehabilitation package which they have jointly formulated. Therefore, it is not correct that once a unit has been referred to the BIFR, there is no other route. There are other route available. Of course, the Goswami Committee has made certain recommendations about the functioning of the BIFR. They have also commented that although it is a quasi-judicial procedure which they are following but matters are being delayed too long. Therefore, the functioning of the BIFR needs to be looked into. That matter is before the Government.

Joint sampling by SEBs and Coal authorities

*364. SHRI SOM PAL: †
SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the meeting held by Secretary, Programme Implementation on 12th June, 1991 it was decided that joint sampling of coal by SEBs & Coal authorities at Thermal Power Stations would be continued.

(b) whether it is also a fact that in the said meeting representatives of Department of Coal and Central Electricity Authority were present;

(c) whether the aforesaid joint decision is violated by Coal India Ltd. and now CIL has shifted the location of joint sampling at loading end;

(d) whether it is a fact that several SEBs including Gujarat Electricity Board has protested against this unilateral change, if so, what is the response of his Ministry to this change and protest;

(e) whether it is also a fact that coal received from collieries at TPs is not as per notified grades and there is a slippage in the grades of coal by one or two grades; and

(f) what are the reasons for doing away with the exercise of joint sampling at Thermal Power Stations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) (a) to (f) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In the meeting taken by Secretary, Programme Implementation on 12th June, 1991, which was attended by the representatives of Ministries of Power, Railways, Coal, CEA etc. it was decided to maintain the status quo of joint sampling at the power house end at the colliery and in accordance with the prevalent practice.

(c) No, Sir. In a subsequent development, the Standing Committee of Secretaries in their meeting held on 15.10.1991 decided that all quality inspections should be done at the colliery end before despatch and not at the consumers end after despatch. Further an independent Third Party Inspection Agency for quality assurance for coal should be established preferably through the Coal Controller's Organisation on a self-financing basis. In accordance with this decision Coal India Ltd. have shifted the sampling to the loading end.

†The Question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Som Pal.